



Offering Up Some Free “Samples”

What’s a Remix? And How’s That Even Legal?

Aren’t Those OUR Photos?

“Someone stole our park’s photo!” you scream. But the odds are that they didn’t. They’ve grabbed something that’s in the public domain – a photo a ranger took of that amazing view or cool historic sight – and used it to create new art.

The idea of “remix” is the engine that runs the internet – and National Parks are the perfect source of fuel. A remix is when someone takes a piece of content and bends it, shapes it, cuts it, and pastes it to make a whole new work of art or expression. To do that, you need raw material. And National Parks have raw material in spades!

Any work prepared by an employee of the United States Government as part of that person’s official duties usually immediately enters the Public Domain. Most federal documents – even this guide – are in the public domain.

That means when it hits the web, folks can make new things with it. That short biography could get incorporated into a Wikipedia article about that person. That photo of a beautiful tree could end up on the birthday card someone makes their aunt. That podcast you record could get sampled for a new hip-hop hit. And it’s ALL legal. They don’t even need to give credit – though it sure is nice when they do.



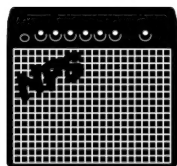
Encouraging Users to Remix Our Content

Imagine loving someplace enough to make new art about it. That’s a powerful type of care and appreciation of a place. We should remind our users at every turn that the material we post is up for grabs to remix and reframe. That short article about frogs? Encourage folks to share and reuse it where they’d like! These photos taken by a ranger on a trail? Let folks know they’re up for grabs, ready to be made into something new.



Helping Our Visitors Stay In The Clear

Does all the content you share acknowledge where it came from? There are myriad ways to do this. Photo galleries allow you to set what rights a photo holds – properly tagging their “Constraints Information” as public domain or copyrighted. Acknowledging the information in the credits section or right in the text of a page can also clearly show visitors what can be remixed and what can’t.



Using Our Voice To Amplify Their New Art

We’re not the only ones who can share amazing stories about our places. Sometimes, the best thing we can do is lean back and hand the microphone to our visitors. The new art they produce about our places can speak just as powerfully about their meanings. Simply boosting the signal of new things others make is just as important as making new things ourselves.

The Art Won’t Always Please You...

When things enter the public domain, it means people can use them for *any* purpose – from the joyful and celebratory to the vulgar or daft. And that’s OK. Creators have been remixing and reimagining art for generations. Some are amazing. Some are just memes. Producing material that goes directly into the public domain means being comfortable – even excited – seeing a photo you took for work on someone’s t-shirt when you go to a fast food restaurant.

